

MSU anaerobic digestion facility earns national recognition

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EAST LANSING, MI -- Michigan State University (MSU) was presented the Institutional Biogas Project of the Year Award for the MSU South Campus Anaerobic Digester.

MSU received the award from the American Biogas Council for excelling in innovation, technology, collaboration and managing complex systems.

The anaerobic digestion facility generates approximately 3,000 megawatt-hours per year of renewable energy by processing organic waste from campus dining halls, food processing facilities and the MSU Dairy Farm.

In addition to renewable energy for campus use, the facility also diverts nearly 10,000 tons per year of organic waste from landfills and wastewater treatment plants.

"It's an honor to receive this recognition. This is a unique project. It's one of the largest operating anaerobic digesters on a university campus," said Dana Kirk, who manages the MSU Anaerobic Digestion Research and Education Center (ADREC).

"Coupled with our teaching, research and outreach programs, we are developing new sustainable energy solutions that will have a positive impact in all regions of the world," Kirk said.

"We know that the work at Michigan State is groundbreaking on a number of levels," said Ajit Srivastava, chair of the Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering.

"ADREC provides us with a unique set of capabilities and positions us in a leadership position to conduct research and offer educational opportunities to improve sustainability not just on the MSU campus but for the entire Great Lakes region and beyond."

Several companies were involved in building the digester, including technology provider Anaergia, engine supplier 2G Cenergy of Florida and contractor Weiland-Davco based in Lansing.

The American Biogas Council is an industry association, which represents more than 200 companies dedicated to maximizing the production and use of biogas from organic waste.